

Remarks/Arguments

The Examiner is thanked for the careful review of this Application. Claims 1-27 are pending after entry of the present Amendment. Amendments were made to claims to better define what Applicant claims to be the invention and to comply with the requirement set forth in the Final Office Action. These amendments do not introduce any new matter, and as such, do not require a new search.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102:

The Office has rejected claims 1-6, 9-14, and 17, 19, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,738,574 to Tolles et al. (hereinafter "Tolles"). It is respectfully submitted that Tolles fails to disclose each and every element of the claimed invention, as defined in amended independent claims 1, 9, 17, and 18.

The Office asserts that Tolles discloses "a handler configured to include a leaf structures 90 rotatably coupled to a turret 902." However, the Office does not point to a specific component as the handler. Contrary to the Office's contention, Applicant submits that Tolles fails to disclose a handler.

Furthermore, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Office's assertion that Tolles discloses a leaf structure, as defined in the claimed invention. Specifically, the Office contends that the carousel 90 of Tolles is a pair of leaf structures. First, claims 1, 9, and 17 of the claimed invention define "a leaf structure." As such, the carousel 90 of Tolles pointed out to be a pair of leaf structures by the Office cannot be equivalent to "a leaf structure," as defined in claims 1, 9, and 17. If it is the Office's contention that the carousel 90 is a pair of leaf structures, as applicable to claim 18, the Office cannot take the opposite position with respect to claims 1, 9, and 17, and define the carousel as a leaf structure. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the carousel of Tolles is not the same as the leaf structure of the claimed invention.

Additionally, the carousel 90 of Tolles discloses four carrier devices instead of two, as defined in claim 1, 9, and 17. In fact, Tolles relies on each of the four carrier devices and the three polishing areas during each processing cycle. In Tolles, a wafer is applied onto each of the polishing areas in sequence and for a specific amount of time such that one-third of the total polishing is performed in each of three polishing areas. Thus, if at least three polishing areas are not present, the wafer cannot be totally polished. As such, the carousel of Tolles

cannot handle a wafer completely with a leaf structure that includes a pair of carrier devices, as defined in claim 1, 9, and 17. Nor can the carousel of Tolles perform a polishing operation with a polishing area, as defined in claim 9 and 17. Thus, the carousel of Tolles cannot perform the same function as a leaf structure or even a pair of leaf structures.

Applicant also respectfully submits that the Office has failed to point out to a component that the Office asserts to be the fingers, as defined in the claimed invention. As can be seen in Figures 1 and 2 of Tolles also referred to by the Office, the carousel 90 of Tolles includes four slides 908 each configured to slide along a respective slot 910 defined in the carousel support plate 906. Each of the wafer heads is fixed to the respective slide 908.

Assuming that the Office contends that the four slides 908 and the associated slots 910 functions as the fingers, as defined in the claimed invention, (a proposition with which Applicant disagrees), Tolles discloses a carousel 90 that includes at least four fingers. This is in contrast to the claimed invention as defined in claims 1, 9, and 17, wherein the apparatus includes a leaf structure having a pair of fingers with each finger holding a carrier device.

Additionally, the Office has further failed to point out which one of the slots 910 and the associated slides 908 the Office asserts to form a single leaf structure. That is, the Office has failed to point out whether the two adjacent slots 910 and slide 908 create a leaf structure or the two slots 910 and slides 908 defined 180 degrees apart.

Furthermore, as acknowledged by the Office in the Final Office Action, Tolles discloses applying each wafer on a single polishing pad one after another. Thus, Tolles fails to teach polishing two wafers on one polishing pad together. As amended, however, independent claim 1 defines that the pair of workpieces are capable of being polished on one of the plurality of polishing areas; independent claim 9 defines that carrier devices apply the work pieces together onto the polishing area; independent claim 17 defines that each pair of carrier devices is configured to be applied together onto a respective polishing area; and independent claim 18 defines that each pair of carrier devices is configured to be applied together onto a respective polishing area. Accordingly, Tolles fails to teach each and every feature of the claimed invention as defined in claims 1, 9, 17, and 18.

Thus, independent claims 1, 9, 17, and 18 are respectfully submitted to be patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Tolles. In a like manner, dependent claims 2-6, 10-14, 17, 19, and 21 each of which directly or indirectly depends from the applicable independent claim are

submitted to be patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Tolles for at least the reasons set forth above regarding the independent claims 1, 9, and 18.

Indication of Allowability:

Applicant acknowledges the allowability of subject matter in claims 23-27.

Applicant hereby submits that this Proposed Amendment complies with 37 C.F.R. 1.116(b) and should be entered. The proposed amendments were made to comply with the requirements set forth by the Office in the Final Office Action. Furthermore, the proposed amendments better define what Applicant claims to be the invention and present the rejected claims in better form for consideration on appeal. Additionally, the proposed amendments do not raise any new issues and do not require an additional search. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests entry of this Proposed Amendment.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the pending claims 1-27 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions concerning the present Amendment, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at (408) 749-6900, ext. 6913. If any additional fees are due in connection with filing this Amendment, the Commissioner is also authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Order No. LAM2P232A). A duplicate copy of the transmittal is enclosed for this purpose.

Respectfully submitted,
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